

REMARKS/ARGUMENT**Regarding the Claims in General:**

Claims 2-22 are now pending. Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice and has been rewritten as new claim 21, and those claims previously dependent on claim 1 have been made dependent on claim 21. Claim 2 has also been amended slightly to improve its form.

Claims 11-20 are withdrawn from consideration at this time.

Claim 21 now recites more explicitly what was already at least implicit in original claim 1, and has therefore not been narrowed for statutory purposes related to patentability.

New claim 22 has been added to provide applicants with additional protection to which they appear to be entitled in light of the known prior art.

Regarding the Prior Art Rejections:

In the outstanding Office Action, claim 1 was rejected as anticipated by Mimata et al. U.S. Patent 6,505,397 (Mimata) and claims 3, 4, 5, and 10 were rejected as obvious over Mimata. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Preliminarily, it is noted that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 stated on page 3 of the Office Action refers only to claim 1, but the subsequent discussion refers also to claims 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9. These claims will therefore be deemed to have been rejected along with claim 1.

Turning now to the merits, although Mimata and the present invention may be said to be in the same field of endeavor, they are concerned with quite different problems. In particular, Mimata is directed to apparatus for detaching dice having upwardly projecting connecting wires from a carrier film. In contrast, the present invention is concerned with handling very thin dice which have a tendency to break if not handled properly. This problem is of no concern to Mimata; the thickness of the dice is never even mentioned in the patent.

The difference in focus leads to distinguishing structural differences and new claim 21 has been written to improve the form of its predecessor claim 1, and also to better highlight these differences. Specifically, claim 21 is directed to apparatus for detachment of a thin die from an

adhesive film on which a plurality of dice are mounted. The claimed apparatus includes an ejector device comprising a plurality of ejector pins which are:

. . . operative to initiate detachment of a die from the film by contacting the film under the die on a second surface of the film opposite the adhesive surface substantially at the corners of the die within a predetermined distance from the edges of said die and by raising the film under the corners of the die to separate the film under the corners of die is separated from the die . . .

and

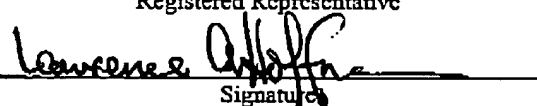
a collet operative to detach the die from the film after detachment has been initiated by the ejector device, and to hold the die after detachment from the film.

This construction is quite different from Mimata, in which separation of the dice from the carrier film is initiated by a push-up cylinder 13 which acts on the film under the *center* of a die which is to be separated from the film. After the initiating action of push-up cylinder 13, central pin 12 and peripheral pins 14 push the die further upward to completely detach it from the film, and then carry the detached die up to a level at which it is engaged by a pair of holding levers 32a and 32b. This sequence of operations is clearly evident from Figs. 1(a) through 1(d) and the operation of push-up cylinder 13 and pins 12 and 14 is described at col. 3, lines 30-44.

Claims 2-10 and 22 are dependent on allowable claim 21, and are therefor allowable for the reasons stated above. In addition, these claim recite features which, in combination with the features of their respective parent claims are neither taught nor suggested in Mimata.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

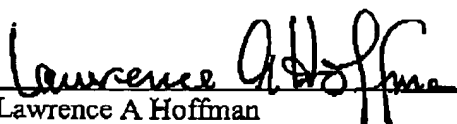
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted by Facsimile to (703) 872-9306 addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date indicated below.

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Date of Signature
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Respectfully submitted,



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